HOUSE
79-81 SIMPSONS ROAD

SURVEY DATE: 1991-2

STUDY GRADING: B

CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1898-9

FIRST OWNER : CRAWFORD, JESSIE (BUILDER)

CITATION:

History

A stone reserve was gazetted at this site in 1886, alongside an earlier 1870 stone reserve and another for water supply (mining) purposes, created in the 1880s.[1] Further north was the Benevolent Asylum reserve of 1876 and, to the south, today's Canterbury Park reserve.[2] William Siler and J Rampa (1892) were granted lots on either side of the reserve.

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1 Gov.Gaz 1886, 1399; G.G. 1870, 612; G.G. 1883, 936
2 G.G. 1876, 842

A bricklayer, Jessie Crawford, was the first rated owner of a house on this site in 1895, the land still belonging to the Crown.[1] The property valuation rose in the next year, but jumped more dramatically (by 50%) in 1899. The 1898-9 Field Book lists Jessie's house as 'EB' or earthbrick, and a new valuation and the number occupying the house as formerly five, now six. The next Field Book (1900-1) lists the house as brick and six persons in residence. Apart from William Crawford's house, next door, this was the only brick house in Simpsons Road.[2]

Jessie Crawford resided there into the 1940s, followed by Queenie Metcalf in the mid-1940s and Horace Metcalf in the mid-1950s. Queenie was shown as occupier-owner on a 1964 plan, which shows the house connection to the sewer.[3]

Description

Built in two-colour brickwork (some tuck-pointed), this house is asymmetrically planned with projecting room bays on the south and west elevations, one gabled, the other hipped. The gable front bay is its most distinctive element, with its finial and dentillation still complete. Other unusual details are the dog toothing under window sills and the vermiculated blocks and panels set into each sill fascia. The oculus set in the gable is also vermiculated and surrounded by radial voussoirs in cream and red. The verandah roof has a bullnose profile, typical of the late 19th and early 20th century, but the timber posts are square-section (chamfered) with capitals, a pattern more typical of the late 19th century. The cast-iron integral frieze and bracket patterns was also popular in that era. Windows are paired, but retain the Victorian era double-hung sashes. There are some indications of the previous garden, but much of today's landscape is recent.

External Integrity

Extensive additions have been made at the rear.

Context

It faces Glen Lyon (66 Simpsons Road), one of the few contemporary adjacent houses: it is otherwise isolated.

Significance

Architecturally, the house stands out from others in the area because of its larger size, period detailing and face brick construction although it is typical only, on a regional or State basis.

Historically, the house presumably expresses well its first owner's trade and the success perhaps which he found in it. It may also be linked with the stone reserve which once occupied the site.

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1 RB1894, 1158
2 FB1898-9, 1900-1 n.n.; RB1899-1900, 1240, 15; RB1899, 1232, 15; RB1898, 1216, 10
3 BWB DRP631